

10370  
THE  
RECONCILER.

OR, A  
S E R M O N  
Preached before a  
C O M M U N I O N,

B Y  
I O H N A R I S, M<sup>r</sup>. of Arts of *Mag-*  
*dalen* Colledge in *Oxford*, now Rector  
of *Midcleiden* in the Countrey of *Bucks*.

To which is added a Charm for a slanderous tongue,  
briefly written in a Letter to an obstinate  
Offender that way.

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I AM. 3. 6. *The Tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity, so is the Tongue amongst our members, that it defiles the whole body, and sets on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell. wrath kills the soole, and envy slayes the silly one.*

MAT. 5. 9. *Blessed are the Peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of Gods*

PROV. 24. 24, 25. *He that sayes to the wicked thou art righteous, Nations shall abhor him; but to him that rebukes him shall be delight, and a good blessing shall be upon him.*

HEB. 12. 14. *Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which none shall see God.*

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L O N D O N,

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1030



## *The Preface to the Reader.*



Ourteous Reader, I have here brought to light (what I never meant should see the Sun) a plain Piece framed for vulgar ears, which brook no descant; I was loath to licke it into any other shape then that in which it first appeared, (Truth needs no varnish, whose native nakednesse becomes her well enough.)

Onely give me leave to make some Apologie for my selfe, that I trouble the presse in this scribbling Age, wherein it wants no imployment, though much good worke. I have been oppressed, (no wonder in these times, wherein few of the coat are free,) and reaching for remedy, have onely been recompenced with further wrongs, as great as envy or malice could lay upon me: When my adversary saw I heeded not my goods, but fate downe quietly with much losse, he flew upon my Name and Office. Whether he fell upon the one for the others sake, or whether he malignes both, I know not, my office I must confesse, hath made me the more busie with him, and so hath made him the more bold with me, who might have passed for an inoffensive man, had I been of any other robe.

His guilt at last made him fly my teaching as too

sharp (it seems) for dainty sin; the Word without ~~my~~ knowledge found him out, and whip't him (as he saies) too much; yet I never named the man, nor any other in the Pulpit in my life. It may be I whip't his sins; what made those buyers and sellers in his soule, which should be the Temple of the Holy Ghost? Shall the House of Prayer be made an House of Merchandize, or a Den of Thieves, and must not I use such a scourge as God hath put into my hand to cleare the roome, to drive them out?

*Malo perdere  
amicum quam  
videre amicum  
perdere seip-  
sum.*

Alas, if God would be pleased but to open this mans eyes, so that he might be able to distinguish between himselfe and his sinne, he would soon perceive I took his part against his fiercest foes, ventured to lose his favour, that I might be a meanes to winne his soule; (such a gnat as this may easily be swallowed without much straining:) If he were not guilty, he was never whip't, if he were, his punishment was just, and a wise child would have made little noise, but mended his fault, wiped his eyes, praised God for so discreet and faire a warning; For the truth is, there is no place more respective toward particulars, and so more proper for modest reproofe then the Pulpits are, though nothing must be kept back, yet all may be reprov'd, and none need blush for it; in full Congregations there are so many guilty of the same sin, that none can point, or say to any individuall, thou art indeed the man, unlesse any (as the godly will) say so in private to himselfe

But for some supposed jerks (given not by me so much as by his owne guilty conscience) my adversary



versary (as he sayes) shunn'd the Congregation where I teach ; yet (it seems) thought his owne recusancy was not sufficient for my disgrace, but censures my Preaching at a venture upon all occasions, that he might draw others with him into the same contempt of it. Yet the Parish being for the most part (unlesse it be some few of his owne planting) quiet, harmlesse men, he hath been followed with a traine no more great then good ; though he that will quarrel with his Minister (right or wrong) can never want some (in this yron age) as they be to second him.

*June 21 1684*

When this plot would take no further (to give my Ministry a more killing wound) he fals upon my life. If he cannot destroy my name by my Ministry, he will attempt to destroy my Ministry by my name ; for want of truth he was bold to belye me ; he reports (and would have men believe him) that I writ Letters, or a Letter to his Master (for he is a Bayliffe) to put him out of his place : An haynous crime, as he makes it, if he be just, and that report true ; But know good Reader, this slander of his made me write that letter to him, which thou shalt find at the end of this Sermon ; which I writ not onely to cleare my selfe, but to convince him of the sin, that he might repent. But alas, we can but plant, or water, 'tis God alone that gives the increase, his time is not yet come.

Spiders gather poyson where honey might be found, if the Bee had had the searching of the flower ; what I intended should cure his disease, increased

*The Preface to the Reader.*

increased it; he flies upon my Letter with as much fury as before upon my selfe, but behind my Letters back too, repeats it ( as the Devill alledges Scripture ) onely by scraps to his companions, and will not suffer it to speak for it selfe, for feare indeed it should convince them. And yet he hath the face, at least the cunning to talke of printing of it to my disgraces; nay more, said to a speciall friend of mine, that he would give twenty shillings toward the charge of the Presse, which is one maine reason of the publication of it.

It may be thou wilt say, 'tis sharp: 'Tis true, but thou knowest sharp medicines are most fit to cure old diseases, upon which *Lenitives* could doe no good. I have heretofore talked, admonished in private, before some company, writ often, prayed, yet this deafe Adder would not be charmed: I am now come to the last remedy, [*Tell the Church*] it may be their Prayers that read, may be more prevalent then all my paines: *Convert him, O Lord, and he shall be converted; turn him unto thee, and he shall be turned.*

One grand exception against me for that Letter, was, that it was delivered him in the Church, when he was upon his knees powring forth his soule to God; What place more fit for a Letter of this subject? Yet this was not my fore-sight, but Gods providence, who would none of his sacrifice, though brought to the Altar, till his offended brother had warned him of his duty, which he should have thought of himself, (.i.) of being reconciled first. I had indeed kept the Letter by me some weeks,

weeks, and not having seen him at Church in some moneths before, sent it on Saturday night to a neare friend of his, to give (not to him, but) to some<sup>e</sup> of his people; Now could I divine that he which had been so long absent, would be there that day himselfe? No; but who sees not, that this man seekes for a knot in a rush? If the Letter were good it selfe, 'tis not the worse for the place it was delivered in; if naught, I know it is not that Church can mend it; let the Reader judge of it. however, it was then sealed, and he put it in his pocket, where a wise man would have kept it close to this day, since it proved so good that he nor all his friends know how to frame a good answer to it, his repentance would be the best, 'tis not I, but he that first made a publike businesse of it; I come now abroad only to see the poore reviled Letter may have fair play, which desires no more, but that it may speak for it selfe.

Other slanders he hath broached since, as full of malice, as void of honesty or wit, but I leave them to his selfe-condemned Conscience: Had this poore Sermon escaped his censure, it had scaped the Presse.

It was preached at a Communion to give the guilty of injury occasion to seeke to be reconciled, which I rooke to be the drift of this Text, *Mat. 5. 23, 24.* [*If thou bring thy gift to the Altar, &c.*]

This man (though he heard it not, but at the second hand) affirms boldly that I mistook the sense, and

and that the contrary to what I said, hee sayes he will make appeare to be the truth; I thinke hee meanes that *the innocent party should not offer his gift till he went his way to be reconciled.*

A contradicting Prophet me thinkes, no lesse ignorant then bold, that runs before God sends him; yet a fit companion for many proud Dreamers of thesetimes, who like *Vezza*, think the Ark, the truth, must needs faile or fall except they lay their unhallowed hands or lips upon it.

But this uncircumcised Philistine, this *Goliath* defies not me alone, but (before he is aware) the whole host of Israel; for the sense of this Text, I meane, the present Assembly of Divines, together with *Calvin, Beza, Perkins, &c.* as godly and learned men, as ever the reformed Churches bred; Nay, me-thinks, he defies God himselfe, whose wayes are more equall then to suffer the malicious to barre the innocent from the benefit of his Sacraments or Word, unlesse he first waite upon them that have done the wrong, no it is enough for him to forgive it.

I have spoken more of my selfe in this Sermon, I thinke, then in all the Sermons that ever I preached in my life before; Pray thee pardon that folly, though I can make *S. Pauls* Apology for it; this man, and they whom he hath mispossessed, have forced me to it, *I am become a fool (sayes Paul) in glorying, but ye have compelled me; for I ought to have been commended of you. Paul wiped out other slanders with an Oath, (nor covetom, God is witnesse)*  
why

why not I these with my Pen?

Ministers suffer not alone, the Gospell in some sort, suffers with them: If wee cleare not our selves when we can, wee injure GOD with us.

Alas, what though I am reproached, reviled, oppressed? I know it is such weather of the world, as must weare mee out; I know what I here publish among the ignorant, and obstinate, if God over-rule not, is more like to raise a new storme, then prove any shelter to me. I heede not my selfe, why should I speed any better then my Master, or my Brethren? But I am loath the Truth should suffer, either by my doings, or neglect, which with this mans presumption, together with the importunity of a most indeared Friend, made mee admit (as much beyond my intent, as against my disposition) that this *Filius horæ*, this weake Childe of mine, which lay but a few dayes in the Wombe, and was borne (as I thought) to breath but an houre, should come forth to a longer life, then I dreamed of in the begetting of it.

If my adversary that provoked it, stand more upon his credit still then upon his salvation, (which God forbid,) and pay, as he hath promised, twenty shillings toward the Midwifery of this Brar, I doubt the Reader will judge he hath a very hard bargaine of it; but I hope it will worke the

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*The Preface to the Reader.*

right way upon him, thee, and my selfe, which  
that it may, shall be the prayers of.

From my Study in *Mid-*  
*cleyden* in the County of  
*Bucks*, Mar. 10. 1650.

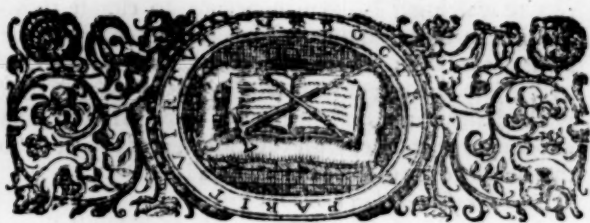
Thy Friend in Christ,

*Iohn Aris.*

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THE

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# The Reconciler.

MAT. 5. 23, 24.

*Therefore if thou bringest thy gift to the Altar, and there remembreſt that thy Brother hath ought againſt thee;*

*Leave there thy gift before the Altar, firſt be reconciled to thy Brother, then come, and offer thy gift.*



Our Saviour in this Chapter expounding the ſixt Commandment (*thou ſhalt not kill*) ſhewes the captious Scribes, and Phariſees, that the extent of that Law was larger then they yet underſtood. *i.e.* That not onely he that actually killed a man was a murderer; but hee alſo that was but angry with his brother without a cauſe, or did but ſay thou foolle, was in danger of hell fire.

fire. Whereupon hee exhorts not onely actual murderers, to wash their hands in innocency, to cleanse themselves from bloud-guiltinesse, before they compasse the Altar of the Lord : but those also that had offered any, the least injury in thoughts or words ; who (though they washed their hands) might murder through hatred, and evill language, murder with their mindes, or tongues. So that he saies even to these as I have read ;

*Therefore if thou bring thy gift, &c.*

In which words Christ expresses himself by allusion to the Law, under which men worshipped God by Sacrifices, on Altars, as we do now by Sacraments, and Prayer. And here I take his sense, and meaning (by way of similitude) to be this.

See Calvin  
upon this  
place, Signifi-  
cat quantisper  
alieni sumus  
nostra culpa à  
proximis, ac-  
cessum nobis ad  
Deum non pate-  
re.

As then murderers, or those persons that had been any way injurious to their brethren, were not fit to offer Sacrifice under the Law : so such malefactors were not fit for any worship, or service of God under the Gospel now ; yet this they were not to leave undone, but to fit themselves for the worke, that it might be well done, as well as done : that like *Abel* and his offering, they and (their sacrifice) they and their service, might be accepted of the Lord : for this purpose saies Christ here, *first be reconciled, then come, &c.*

Negat Christus  
Deo exalari esse  
cujusquam ob-  
lationem  
qui fratri of-  
fensa non satis-  
fecerit. Beza,

Now if any make any doubt (as me thinks they should not in a thing so plaine) who our Saviour speaks to, either the offender, or the offended, when he saies, *if thou remembrest that thy Brother hath ought against thee* : I say he speaks to him that hath done the wrong ; For to have ought against one, signifies to have some fault to lay justly to his charge. You know hee that is to forgive is the innocent party ; and tis hee in the Scripture phrase that is said to have ought against his brother, and not his brother against him. As you may see, *Mark* 11. 25. (*When yee stand praying, forgive if yee have ought against any.*) Our brother hath something against us when wee have wronged him in word or deed, saies Mr. *Perkins* up-  
on this place, *hath ought against thee, (i.e.)* say the As-

sembly



sembly of Divines, *can accuse thee of, or charge thee with any wrong done to him, in Mar. 5. 23.*

The sense thus cleared, we shall note from these words (according to our occasion at this time) these things, which I purpose shall bound my ensuing discourse.

1. That God accepts of no service, or worship from them that are notorious for any sin; especially from men-haters, from such as do not love their brethren.

2. That they which have wronged their brethren, given them offence, ought to seeke to give them satisfaction; go, and confesse their fault, and repent that they may be forgiven, and so reconciled.

3. That this duty of seeking reconciliation ought not to be delayed. Leave thy gift indeed, yet not altogether, but with as much speed as may bee, come againe, come and offer thy gift. Of these in order; of the formost first, which is this.

*Docr.* 1. God accepts of no service, or worship from them that are notorious for any sinne; especially from men-haters, from such as doe not love their brethren.

For proove of this, read *Esa. 1.* You shall finde God complains there of Israels sinne: they were his children indeed, but they had rebelled against him. (*I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me, Esa. 1. 2.*) Whilest this was their condition, do but see what account God made of their service, of their most holy workes, he forbids them: Hee delighted in no outward worship, more than sacrifice, &c. But not from them; no (saies God to these Rebels) *bring me no more vaine oblations, incense is abomination unto me, they new Moones and thy Sabbaths, thy calling of Assemblies I cannot away with, tis iniquity, even thy solemn Meeting, Isa. 1. 13.* Such mens very prayers are sin, and God regards them not; as you may see, *Isa. 1. 15.* *When ye spread forth your hands I will hide mine eyes from you, yea when ye make many prayers, I will not heare: Why? (because they wanted mercy.) Your hands are full of blood,* saies the Text, *Isaiah 1. 15.* Therefore (that they

might not lose their labour) the Prophet advises them to wash, and be cleane, before they offer to change a word with God: but then indeed, and not till then sayes hee, *Come now, and let us reason together, though your sinnes were as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, &c.* See *Esay* 1. 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18. What have swine to do with pearles, or dogs with holy things? What hast thou to doe (saies David to the wicked) *What hast thou to do to de-clave my Statutes, or that thou shouldest take my Covenant into thy mouth? since thou hatest instruction, and castst my words behind thee, Psal. 50. 16, 17.* And the Prophet *Jeremy*, yet more roundly; *Will ye steale, murder, commit adultery, and sweare falsely, and burne incense unto Baal, and walke after other Gods whom you know not? Wilt thou give thy mouth to evil, and thy tongue to frame deceit, sit and speak against thy brother, and slander thine owne mothers son? (as David speakes.) And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my Name, and say, we are delivered to do all these abominations? Is this house which is called by my name become a den of robbers? As who should say, I like no such guests, Jer. 7. 9, 10, 11.*

Psal. 50. 19, 20.

You know Christ himselve forbids that holy things should be given to such kind of men as these; which hee compares to Dogges, and Swine, the most uncleane of beastes: for the one is no sooner washed, but it wallowes in the myre; the other vomits indeed, cleanses his stomacke, but turnes to his vomit; by and by licks up that filth againe; other conditions they have also as vilde as these: the Swine will trample any thing (how precious soever) in the dirt; the churlish Cur will snarle, and not onely flie upon the laborious Ox, but sometimes in his face that feeds him.

Mat. 7. 6.

Such is the nature of sinnefull man, he will not onely abuse holy things, but disgrace and revile those which minister them unto him; nay, hee will scarce spare God himselve. Whence that advice of our Saviour, *Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast yee your pearles before Swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and*

turne againe and rent you. In which words Christ gives his reasons, why God likes not the admitting of the wicked to his ordinances, (*i.e.*) Because (like Swine) they undervalue them, trample them under foot, slight them, make no other use of them, but (that most abusive) a cloak for sin.

Which of us (Brethren) can brook to bestow his gifts where he is sure they shall be abused; not any that is wise. Therefore blame not God though he be rather angry then pleased, when such rude men thrust in to pray, to heare his Word, to receive his Sacraments; nay blame him not, though rather then heale their soules, hee punish their car-kasses for this presumption. as hee did those in times past, *1 Cor. 11. 30.* (*For this cause many are weak, and sickely among you, and many sleepe, (i.e.) are dead, why? because they eate and dranke the Lords Supper unworthily. For this cause some were sicke, some killed, nay some damned; for they eat and drank judgement, or damnation to themselves, 1 Cor. 11. 29, 30.*

The Sacrifice is of more worth than the Altar, and the gold, (Gods Word) the treasure is better than the Temple wherein tis taught, or layed up. If God wither *Ieroboams* arme, that was but stretcht out against the Altar; what shall become of him which abuses the Sacrifice that is upon it? God may justly wither his soule, cast it into hell. If Christ could not abide to see the Temple abused, but whipt the buyers and sellers out, because they made that holy place. (his fathers house) an house of Merchandize, a den of thieves (as he did) *Mat. 21. 12, 13.*) How shall they bee punished, that in that house, abuse prayer, preaching, Sacraments, nay God himselfe? Why such deserve to be whipt with Scorpions instead of rods, (as the Scripture speakes.)

This is one reason why God accepts not of worship, or service from wicked men; because indeed they doe not so much serve him as themselves in the abuse of his holy things.

Secondly, because these men like Dogges and Swine,  
will

Mat. 7. 6.

2 Cor. 11. 24,  
25.

1 Thes. 4. 8.

will turne againe and rent you, (saies Christ to his Disciples.) That is, teare their names to pieces, nay teare their very flesh, not stick to take away their lives, that minister about these holy things. Fell not *Paul* among such Dogs, and Swine, when he fought with beasts at *Ephesus*, after the manner of men? When hee was thrice beaten with rods, and fivetimes of the Jewes received fourty stripes save one? When stoned till he was supposed to bee dead, at *Lystra* by the people whom he came to teach, *Act. 14. 19.* God will not accept of such mens service, because they love him not, nay despise, or hate him. Let not men deceive themselves, such as their affections are towards Gods Messengers, the same they are towards God himself; so saies Christ, *He that despises you, despises me, and he that despises me, despises him that sent me.* And the Apostle, *Hee also that despises, despises not man, but God, who hath also given unto us his holy Spirit.* And what cares God for the dissembling service of such hypocrites? which is not so much his service as their sinne, and so rather to be punished than praised, or accepted of him. As Saint *Paul* speakes of them that abused Gods ordinances, *1 Cor. 11. 22.* *One is hungry, and another is drunken; what have ye not houses to eat and to drink in? or despise yee the Churches of God, and shame them that have not? what shall I say to you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not.*

*Use.* Friends, does not God accept of *Caines* Sacrifice, of the worship or service that is done him by notorious wicked men? you see hee does not, and I have shewed you why, they defile his Ordinances, they serve not him so much as themselves: serve him not for love to him, or to the workes of godlinesse, but onely for their owne credit, their owne ends.

Why then, why doe all you that are swearers, lyars, drunkards, oppressors, evill speakers, revengefull, malicious, profane persons, (as *Esau*.) take any paines where you have so little thanke for your labour? *Who required these things at your hands?* Why lose yee so much time from

from more pleasing sins, as to come and sinne with torment in the Church : (where you sit upon thornes, where the Word gades you, where you pray with wearisomnesse, heare with vexation (being impatient of reproofe) why doe yee trouble your selves to doe God unwilling service ? (which he counts no service, and so no benefit to you) when you might serve the devill abroad more freely, with more ease, with more delight.

*Obje.* Why (say some) because we are wicked, would you not have us heare, pray, or receive the Sacraments at all ? not so neither.

*Solu.* But I would have you doe these things, that they might be your vertues, rather than your sinnes ; that you might be the better for them, not the worse. I would not have you receive as *Judas* (into whom the devill entred with the sop;) I would not have you receive onely for company sake, for worldly credit ; nor pray (as the Scribes and Pharisees) only that you might be thought holy, onely that you might bee seen or heard of men. Nor hear the Word only out of formality, with resolutions (say God what he will) to doe what you list. Like those to whom the Prophet *Jeremy* preached in times past ; who said to him, as some now tous ; *As for the word which thou hast spoken to us, in the name of the Lord, wee will not hearken unto thee, but wee will certainly doe whatsoever goes forth of our own mouth, Jer. 44. 16, 17.*

The truth is, brethren wee love company in these heavenly exercises well enough ; nay, we delight in nothing more then to see Gods house full : to partake of his Ordinances, and thinke it zealously done of any, to incite one another, (as *David* did the people) saying, *Come let us go up unto the house of the Lord*, provided they come all with purposes, and resolutions to grow, and be confirmed in grace, which are the proper ends of these holy workes. So that in bidding the wilfully wicked to stand backe, wee doe no more then what *Paul* said to the vicious *[Corinthians]* *1 Cor. 11. 17.* *Now in this that I declare unto you, I praise you not, that yee come together, not for the better but the worse.* And againe,

*The Reconciler.*

gaine, *If any man hunger, let him eat at home*; Hee would not have them come to the Lords Table as to carnall feasts; no, that was damnable, (*That ye come not together unto condemnation*, 1 Cor. 11. 34.) So say we, bide not away, come, but come prepared: that you may bee welcome to the Master of the Feast himselfe: Lest when he comes to view his guests he put you forth with disgrace, because you thrust in not having on a wedding garment.

For this purpose, to fit them for this work, Christ sends the injurious to be first reconciled; and then come (not before) then come and offer thy gift: whence the next point, which is this:

That they that have wronged their Brethren, given them offence, ought to seek to give them satisfaction; go, and confesse their faults, repent that they may be forgiven, and their gift accepted:

There needs no reconciliation where there hath beene no wrong; no breach of love: which I confesse ought not to be among good Christians, among the Saints.

But though we be Christians, though Saints, yet wee are but men; yea, men that have our infirmities whilest we are below, and there will sometimes be jars amongst us, as long as that make-bate the devill rules in the aire. *Paul and Barnabas* could not alwaies agree.

There are in some strong passions, where judgement is but weake: such men (though they have conscience) may yet easily give offence before they are aware, or take offence sometimes before tis given them.

Indeed the devill takes advantage of our humane frailties, and many times casts a bone of opinion, profit, credit, or discontent between the Saints which they may snarle about, and strive (with too much violence) to pull out of one anothers hands, or teeth, untill the contention growes high. *Paul and Barnabas* had so sharpe a debate concerning *John Mark*, that they departed asunder one from another, *Act. 15. 39.* Now when two are thus false out, there is commonly a fault in one, sometimes in both.

*The Reconciler.*

1052  
9

both : for tis with contenders, as with buyers and sellers ; tis hard for either of them to be without sinne. Therefore upon all discontents, the contenders ought to sit downe and examine themselves, whether they have done wrong, or suffered it.

He that hath suffered wrong must be very ready to forgive indeed ; but the wrong doer, must be as ready to repent ; so saies our Saviour Christ himself.

*Take heed unto yourselves ; if your brother trespass against you, rebuke him ; (marke it, rebuke him) rebuke then you see may stand with love ; and if he repent forgive him ; (mark it again) if he repent.* Luke 17 3,4.

Wee cannot pardon him truly whom God will not forgive ; (which is the obstinate and impenitent.) We have power indeed to binde and loose : but onely according to Gods rule, who forgives none but the truly penitent : yet those as often as they offend, so must wee : for (saies Christ) *If thy brother trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turne again unto thee, saying, I repent ; thou shalt forgive him.* And this duty is very easily performed by the best ; and indeed, by the most couragious and gallant men. Luke 17.4.

*Nam faciles motus mens generosa capit.*

They are the weake, and most cowardly things that are most malicious, most revengefull, most greedy after blood.

*Corpora magnanimo satis est prostrasse Leoni ;  
Pugnam suam finem, cum jacet hostis habet.*

If Naturalists say true, the Lyon fights no longer then his foe resists ; when his enemy is humbled he hath done. Tis not so with weaker beasts, who are apt upon advantage, to let fury run without reines, to spoile and kill ; which observation doubtlesse made Solomon say, give mee any malice (save that of the weaker sex) (a she-Bear robbed of her whelps is most terrible.) *Give me any malice,*



*lice, save the malice of a woman. If John Baptist touch Herodias for her sinne, nothing can satisfie her, but his head : or if Joseph will not touch his wanton Mistris in her sinne, she hunts for nothing lesse then his precious life. But with good Christians tis not so, they are easily intreated, be have themselves to an offender that submits, as Job to his friends, or Joseph to his brethren.*

Gen. 50. 21.

They had been envious against him, and expressed it to the hazard of his life; put him into a pit where hee might have perished; at the best, they sold him into a strange land, (not heeding the bringing of their Fathers gray head for this, with sorrow to the grave.) Yet when they humbled themselves Joseph wept. And Joseph wept when they spake unto him, and said, *fear ye not, I will nourish you and your little ones, and he comforted them and spake kindly unto them.* Thus should fallen brethren be taken up with compassion.

Now as he that hath been wronged should thus forgive; so those that have done the injury, should seek the peace; which (as tis a doctrine that I am by my office to perswade to : so tis the second point (you remember) drawne from this Text, (i.e.)

*Doctr.* That the offender, hee that hath given the offence, ought to give satisfaction, ought to seek to be reconciled.

Gen 50. 15.

Jacob (you know) when he was to die, advised not Joseph (that was innocent) to goe to his brethren, but his brethren to him : His brethrens guilty consciences misgave them, made them say among themselves, *peradventure he will hate us, and requite us all the evil that we have done unto him.* Thus they stood awhile at gaze, but at last, (remembering Jacobs advice) they sent messengers unto Joseph, saying, *thy Father did command before hee died, saying, so shall yee say unto Joseph, forgive I pray thee now the trespassse of thy brethren, and their sinne; for they did unto thee evil : And now wee pray thee forgive the trespassse of the servants of the God of thy Father.* And here Joseph forgave, and wept, wept, and forgave; but they first acknowledged

Gen. 50 17-



knowledged their offence. You know *Iob's* friends abused him; as *Eliphaz*, who censured him for a man mercileſſly covetous; ſaying, *thou haſt taken the pledge from thy brother for naught, and ſtripped the naked of their cloathing*: And ſo *Bildad* in another place; *yea the light of the wicked ſhall be put out, and the ſparke of his fire ſhall not ſhine*, *Iob* 8.5. Which made that good man complaine of his friends, ſaying, *theſe ten times have ye reproached me*, *Iob* 19.3. Now when his friends had thus cenſured and reproached him, did God enioyne *Iob* to go and ſubmit to them, or that they ſhould go and make their peace with him? you ſhall finde they were ſent to him. (*Iob* had had wrong enough before) God enioyned him nothing in point of reconciliation, but to forgive; offer Sacrifice for them, and pray, as you may ſee, *Iob* 42.7, 8, 9, 10.

Moſt men are very apt to abuſe their brethren: but nothing goes more againſt ſtomack with any naturall man, than to acknowledge the offence. Tis wiſdome therefore with *Abraham* to prevent quarrels before they come to any height; as he adviſed *Lot*: *Let there I pray thee be no ſtrife between thee and mee, neither between mine Herdſmen and mine, for we are Brethren*. If ſuch petty quarrels among ſervants be backed by their Maſters, the injuries may be great in time, and then the wrong doer (though he be the greater man) muſt at laſt cry *peccavi*, I have done evil; (if he meane to have any thing to doe with God.) Which *Abraham* wiſely prevents, by taking ſuch counſell as *Solemon* gives, *Pro.* 17.14. *The beginning of ſtrife is as when one letteth out water, therefore leave off contention before it be medled with.*

For if the breach bee once made, tis not onely hard to ſtop; but the condition is deſperate whileſt tis running: there is no parle to be had with God, by him that hath done the injury, till he be in charity with man.

He (indeed) that ſuffers may love his enemy, and ſo God too: But the very act of wrong doing, is nothing but want of love to ones brother, or the fruit of it; which

puts him at a distance with his Maker : for he that loves not man whom he hath seen how should hee love God whom he hath not seen ? therefore he that hath done the injury must seek to be reconciled to his brother, as he looks for favour from his God ; for his owne safety, for his own sake ; Who (let his parts other wise bee what they will) is not at all esteemed by God, whilest this fault hangs upon him. That made *Paul* say, *though I speake with the tongues of men, and Angels, and have not charity, I am but as a sounding brasse, or tinkling Cymball, nay (saies he) though I have the gift of prophesie, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge ; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing. Nay further yet.*

1 Cor. 13. 1,  
2, 3.

*Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profits me nothing.*

Friends, is reconciliation so necessary a duty for Christians that have offended to performe, that God preferres it before Prayer, sacraments, the hearing of his Word, any worship or service of his owne ? Nay if men will not bee reconciled, counts he all these their best services to him, their sinne. You see the Text is plaine to this purpose, and I have further proved it to you : The consideration of which, me thinks should make us all look well about us now : We are here according to invitation met, and every guest ( I suppose ) hath now brought his gift to the Altar ; I meane is ready to offer up the sacrifice of prayer, praise and thanksgiving to God, for that great worke of our redemption, by the sufferings of Christ Jesus his well-beloved Sonne ; whose Passion (in a posture of his owne appointment) is presently to be set before our eyes. Are we fit for this worke ? are we heartily reconciled ? Jarres you know there have been amongst us, and loud ones too : but hath he that wronged his brother acknowledged his offence ? Hath hee said as *Jacobs* guilty Sonnes to *Joseph* (that was innocent ?) *Now we pray thee forgive the trespassse of the Servants of the God of thy Father ?* No, the sinne

sinne is evident; but we neither see, nor heare of any such sorrow for it.

Why then, what make you here? what have the contentious to doe with the God of peace? Can you looke for mercy that will not be so much as just? or hope that God will spare you, that study nothing more then to spoile your brethren of their chiefest ornaments? Hast thou undone, as much as in thee lies robbed thy brother of his name, without enriching of thy selfe: and art thou so obstinate that thou wilt not restore it? (which thou maiest doe without impairing thy estate;) that thou wilt not say to the innocent, as the people to *Samuel*, thou hast done us no wrong? but goe through with a villany? hide one sinne with another (as the hypocrites) and yet think (with thy formall presence here, with a few hollow sighs, and fained groanes, with foule hands, and wanton eyes, lift up to heaven) to please thy God? No, *Abite procul hinc abite prophani*, get you gone yee hypocrites, to your proper places, to the shops of vanity; for your service here is nothing but your sinne. (*Let his prayer bee sinne,*) as *David* speaks of the wicked man; therefore go: first, be reconciled, and then come and offer thy gift.

Now, here it may bee some may say to mee, thou hypocrite, first cast the beam out of thine own eie, &c.

Brethren I doubt not but this may be said; for, what may not be said to us? hee that by his office-reproves others, or indeavours but to right himselfe, is commonly recompenced with further wrongs; *reprove a scorner, and he will hate thee*. This very like upon some differences, the envious may say, I have been a troublesome, it may be a malicious man; tis true I would not suffer them to rest so quietly, as (it may bee) they could wish in sinne.

But if to accuse, bee sufficient to condemne, no man that ever lived could yet be innocent: not *Iob*, not Christ himselfe; who was said to be a wine-bibber, a friend of Publicans, and sinners: as if he had countenanced some in sinne; then which you know there was nothing more

*The Reconciler.*

untrue. Tis not so much what is sayd, as who they bee that say it : If they bee wicked men, their tongues are the lesse, or rather no slander; for they doe but vent their owne malice, whilst they talke of mine, or other mens.

I aske no favour; Let my bitterest enemy, or most knowing, come forth, and prove, (or convince me of) one act of revenge or malice that I have committed against any man for the space of twenty yeers, (the time of my aboad here.) And I will not only thank my accuser, but say to him that I have this way offended, before this whole Congregation, as *Jacobs* guilty Sons said to *Ioseph*: *Forgive I pray thee, the servant of the God of thy Fathers.* If any say I have writ, and spake very sharpe things, I deny it not; but tis rather in Gods quarrell then mine owne. I had not an eye so much upon mine owne sufferings, as their sinne that I reprov'd : I have done but my duty in my calling; I have no quarrell against any but his sinne: what they call malice, I know to bee the greatest acts of charity that can be done; these sharpe medicines were tempered (not without some paines,) to cure envy, malice, slander, old diseases, that are most desperate in a man, that I knew by experience, would retort any unsteeled shaft or arrow, not well headed, that I could let out of (Russian) Bow upon him. For like that Leviathan, *The sword of him that layeth at him cannot hold the speare, the dart, nor the habergeon; he esteemeth Iron as straw, and brasse as rotten wood, the arrow cannot make him flee, sling-stones are turned with him into stubble, he laughs or onely chafes at the shaking of any spirituall speares against him; no salve too sharp for the insensible, thats deaded with sin: I hoped onely to rouse, and so to be a meanes to save the soule that laboured under it, which I rather take to bee a vertue in a Minister of the Gospel, then a sin.*

Iob 41. 26, 27,  
28, 29.

2 Tim. 4. 2.  
Lev. 19. 17.

For shall God give me a flocke to keep, and with it a charge, reprove, rebuke, & short, (or as tis in the Law) *Thou shalt not hate thy brother, thou shalt in any wise rebuke him, and not suffer sin upon him: and shall not I sharpen*

sharpen my weapons, or tooles, at Gods forge, who am not onely to cut downe sinne, but to encounter the devill with them? Shall I see Sathan (that thiefe) leading a sheepe of mine into any bye corner of sinne, and silently consent with him? not give the devill an alarum or off-front, nor give that poore sheep an item, and so a rescue; either with my staffe, or my hook, my pen, or my tongue, which I am belit able to reach him with; and tell him (with all the circumstances of terror that I can) that he is in his hands that meanes to murder, nay to damne him? No, when I forbear to write, or speak in such a case as this for fear of clamor; then let my tongue cleave to the roofof my mouth, my right hand wither, and forget her cunning, and not be able to hold a pen. Must I not do the office which God enjoynes me, because ignorant malicious men misconstrue it? because they call that hatred, which wise and good men know to be the truest love.

No, I cannot, I dare not abate anyman a tittle of what I have either writ or spoke; my messuages have been from God, (whose word I ever made my ground and guide) and though they have been sharp, the edge is of Gods owne setting, (whose language tis.) I dare not rebate it, till I see men abate their sinne; and then (as God advises) I shall have milder language for them: take up him that is fallen, with alas our brother; *bee of good cheere, thy faith hath made thee whole.* And these men converted, shall embrace where once they had more mind to stab: extoll and love no men more than those that have dealt most roundly with their sins, according to that saying of Solomon, *Hee that reproveth a man shall finde more favour at the last, then he that flatters with his tongue.*

I praise God (for ought I can finde upon examination of my selfe) I have rather suffered wrong then done it; yet I have no other revenge for my persecutors, but my prayers, *Father forgive them, they know not what they doe.* Alas, what need a man smite them that kill themselves! *vitam in vulnere ponunt*, these envious malicious men may wound their neighbours persons, names, e-

Pro. 14. 13.  
Iob 5. 2.

flates : but these finnes take vengeance on themselves, gnaw out their owne hearts, rots the bones; *wrath kills the fool, and envy slaies the silly one* : Nay without repentance damnes him at the last; such men are rather to bee pittied then reviled. Alas, alas, why will yee sin? why will ye provoke Gods wrath? why will yee die, O house of Israell? No, *go be reconciled, then come and offer thy gift,* (then come.) There must be no long delay; the performing of this duty of reconciliation must be speedy, which is the last point that is to be proved, or made good unto you out of this text.

Ecc. 5. 7.

Tis the saying of Solomon, *make no long tarrying to turn unto the Lord, and put it not off from day to day.* And for wrath in particular, tis the Apostles advice, not to let the Sun go down upon it; hee is a fool that hath no anger in him, wife that rules it : a man may be angry, yet not sinne; for he may bee angry for sin, as *Moses* (that meekest of men) when he broke the Tables of the Law : But this at the best being but a kinde of holy madnesse, must be short; *be angry but sin not,* (saies the Apostle) *Let not the Sun go down upon your wrath, neither give place to the devill*; for the truth is, the devill takes advantage of no one thing more than of delays in putting off of repentance for our sin. If the devill get but one nights lodging with us, he will make his nest on high, hee will fortifie, he will not easily be cast out again.

*Mentem non  
habet, qui iram  
non habet.*

Eph. 4. 26, 27.

*Turpis ejici-  
tur quam non  
admittitur ho-  
stes.*

Heb. 3. 13.

Indeed the longer one harbors any sin (besides other hazards) the deeper it rootes, and so the greater the paines to dig it up again : sin hath the nature of an hot iron, it seares the conscience as it lies, hardens the heart in time, which makes it stick much the faster. Besides, this there is (you know) no time ours but the present : he that saies he will be reconciled to morrow, may die this night, and so before he is aware goe with his purposes unperformed to Hell. Therefore (to make sure work) to day (saies the Apostle) *if ye will hear his voice harden not your hearts.* And Christ (a little below this Text,) *agree with thine adversary quickly, whilest thou art in the way, lest thine adversary deliver thee*

1062  
17

*The Reconciler.*

*thee to the Judge, and the Judge deliver thee to the Officer, and thou be cast into prison, and thou come not out till thou hast paid the utmost farthing.* Mat. 5. 25, 26.

Now if any be willing to be reconciled, presently to avoid the danger, who yet are loath to seek it publicly by reason of some shame; let him know this is but a scare-crow set up by the devill, to hold him in, to continue him in his sin.

Publike wrongs require publike satisfaction: and what need any mans vertue be his shame? Tis a shame I must confesse to be seen to sin; but tis ones honour, and his comfort too, to be found acknowledging, and forsaking of it: *for hee that confesses his sinnes and forsakes them shall have mercy, but he that hides them shall not prosper,* as the Wiseman speaks. Are ye not ashamed to do what the devill either drawes, or drives you to, (*i.e.*) to do wrong; and are you ashamed to do what God commands? Tis God that saies here, *go, first be reconciled;* If you have deceived, oppressed, defamed, learn of *Zachens*, restore not only goods, as he did, but names. And brethren (that you might be moved the rather to obey) I beseech you consider what you are, or what you would be thought to be at least? In these dayes of holinesse, in these times of reformation, sure none are willing to seem lesse than Saints; you would all be taken for sons and daughters of the most high, to whom God hath given and forgiven much, made you members of his catholick Church, all sheep of one pasture, of one fold.

Take heed your works now discover you not, to be goats among the sheep, to bee but hypocrites: does it besee me Gods children to disobey their father which is in heaven? to be contentious? when the Apostle saies, *the Churches of God have no such custome?* does it become Lambes or 1 Cor. 11. 16, sheep of the Lords pasture to growl like dogs and swine, to be alwaies barking at, or biting one another.

You would be thought to bee servants to him that ruleth over all, and is it that great masters pleasure, that you should smite your fellows? strike any one by the throat, that would either pay all if he were able, or owes you nothing?



## The Reconciler.

No, God took order that such a mercilesse servant should be bound hand and foot and cast into utter darknesse.

Therefore I beseech you brethren, breake those chaines of hell, (envy and malice, which the devill hath a long time held you in;) Break them now whilest you have time, no time like the present for this worke, nay no time yours but this, lose it not, for want of taking it by the forelock.

P<sup>at</sup>. Lacon.  
Apoth. p. 455.

I remember in *Plutarch*, that *Achidamnus* (being chosen umpire between two at variance, to make them friends, drew them (say some) into *Minerva's* grove) but (saies he) into the Temple of *Diana*, the meaning is (no doubt) into some place where wisdom and religion use to meet and walk. There he caused them to lay their hands upon the Altar of that goddess, pressing them both to promise and swear that they would do as he should enjoin them, for the attainment of peace: Now having them both thus bound by solemn and sacred oath; I determine (quoth hee) that neither of you depart this Temple, till you have reconciled your selves, and ended all quarrels between you.

I wish I had all this Parish, nay all this Realm, &c. if possible, upon the same advantage, under oath, at this Altar of the true God, in this Temple where Christ set forth the sacrifice of himself; where mercy and truth are met together; whither wisdom, faith, hope, charity; all vertues both morall and divine, either do, or ought to resort.

Then should this houre be the time that should not bee let slip; this Church the place out of which no froward, malicious, or covetous oppressor, no *Zachens* should depart till he had resolved to restore, to right them that hee had made to suffer wrong: Nor should any scornfull Heretique, any proud Sectary, any envious Scribe or brawling Pharisee quit this room, till he were so far humbled, as to resolve to agree with the Orthodox, and for ever hereafter to live together in love like Christians, like brethren in unity; were this in my power, there should none depart this room, till *Jobs* friends (that censured him) till *Jacobs* guilty sons, had confessed their faults, and *Iob* and *Ioseph* their wronged friend, and brother, had not only imbraced, but wept over them.

But



*A Charme for Slanderous Tongues.*

1087  
19

But we can but advise, with or pray : tis God alone (in whose hands are all mens hearts) that must mollifie and soften them ; that is only able to bring this great worke to passe, which we must beseech him in his own time (suddenly if he please) to effect, for his owne glory and our good : for our particular peace, for the peace of the Land; but especially for that peace sake that passeth all understanding, that we may be capable, fit to receive those things here that confer heaven, that will make us partakers of that eternall peace and happinesse in the life to come, which grant Lord for thy Son Christ Jesus sake, to whom, &c.

*Lans Deo.*



*A Charme for Slanderous  
Tongues.*

*If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this mans religion is vain, James 1. 26.*

*I said I will take heed unto my wayes, that I offend not with my tongue, Psalme 39. 1.*

Mr Re:

**I** Doubt not but you remember that of the Prophet, *Can the Blackmore change his skin, or the Leopard his spots? no more can yee do well, that are accustomed to do evil.*

I am sorry to see this verified in you, you have so used your selfe to abuse me, that you cannot abstain, though you have no colour for it : Hath it not been enough for you to oppresse me all this time of war; (without any perfect remedy to this day) but you must slay mee still with that

*A Charme for Slanderous Tongues.*

in a raser, a slanderous tongue? this is hard measure to your Minister: For whom (as you once truly acknowledged under your hand) tis your duty to pray. With what face then could you broach so notorious an untruth as this? that I should write Letters to Sir *Ra.* to move him to displace you, (to the undoing of your wife and children) and say you are sure of it, and can prove it, my innocency assures me of your impudency in it; I am so sure of the contrary, that if you can honestly and fairely prove it, (I shall aske no favour) take me and whip me for it.

Nay, I dare be bold to say, you know you slander me, which makes the crime the more heinous. You have (I hear) had of late some displeasing mesliages from *France*, and I dare say you know the cause, and cannot but see that I have no finger in it. This report of yours raised of me is your meer malice, and other base ends.

I know Sir *Ralph* so just, that he will not displace you at the importunity of any; unlesse he see some misbehaviour of your owne, whatever tis I am ignorant. But it seemes you thinke it more for your credit, to lay the fault on mee, than (where indeed it is) upon your selfe, (if any;) for you think this will not only make for your honour, but (if you can make the slander stick with all your daubing) for my disgrace, whose ruine you have ever sought with as much eagernesse as your own rise. By this false report (I beleeve) you hoped to make my ministry despised, by some of more credit than your selfe, which you thought might countenance your own ill behaviour that way, (if it took) who of late, have been ever snarling at my teaching, and would faine bite, if you knew where to fasten. This unmanly, unchristian behaviour of yours, made me call to minde that saying of *Paul* to *Elimas* the Sorcerer, who strived to draw *Surgius Paulus* the Deputy, (that desired to heare *Paul* and *Barnabas*) from that truth which they had, or might have planted in him: This was an ill office done of *Elimas*; therefore *Paul* (filled with the Holy Ghost) set his eyes upon him, and said (what I could not chuse but think of now) *O full of subtilty, and all mischief, thou child of the*

*the Devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, wilt thou not cease to pervert the right waies of the Lord? Act. 13. 10. Your slander brought this and one thing more to my mind, as that in the 51. Psalm, thy tongue deviseth mischief like a sharpe raser cutting deceitfully, thou lovest evill more then good, and lying more then to speak righteousness, thou lovest all devouring words, O thou deceitful tongue, Psa. 52. 2, 3, 4.*

You made me think upon these things, and fear that you were troubled with the hot disease of that tongue, which *St James* saies sets on fire the whole course of nature, it self being set on fire of hell. Truly Mr R. I pittie your soul more then my self, I can bear this better now, then you can hereafter answer for it: I would be glad to be instrumentall in the cure of this old disease of yours. Let me advise you, wash your mouth with tears of repentance, that the remedy may be present; lest God use that tongue-salve upon you, which he prescribed to *Doeg*, (which is more piercing) and tis this, *God shall likewise destroy thee for ever, he shall take thee away, and pluck thee out of thy dwelling place, and root thee out of the land of the living*, (a charme for an evill tongue worth your reading, *Psal. 52. 5.*) Mr R. if you confesse not that you have wronged me in this report, I shall make a more publike businesse of it; my name is my life, I cannot sit still, and give a sneaking coward leave to cut my throat, which dares not looke me in the face when he does it; one that had been a man indeed, would first have told mee of it, and seen what answer I could have made for my self, before he had defamed me.

Letters I have writ (I confesse) about your injustice in tax, tithes, and quarter, (when you began to misinform your Master.) I hid them not, you shall see them when you please, and you shall find they touched you but in relation to that businesse, and you know produced no other effect, but a charge to you from your Master to be just; (in which you have not yet obeyed him :) But you know that is not the quarrell now, of which there hath not been a word between him and me since your voyage into *France*, nor have we so much as named you since between us. It may bee  
your

*A Charme for Slanderous Tongues.*

your conscience tells you, (your carriage in that businesse being the oppression of some poorer than my self.) It may be your conscience tells you, that you have done enough to make God requite you in your kinde; hence now your jealousie of me: but though I can quit my self of revenge, yet I would wish you to look up to heaven, (that higher hand than mine it may be) would not forgive you, but whip you, that you might repent, and take heed hereafter, how you Josile againk innocency.

When the brasen pot may not swim quietly in the same stream, but the earthen will be quarrelling; if the earthen fall to pieces in the encounter, the fault is its owne, that would venter a broad side, against more hard and approved metall, that was better able to bear a knock; no policy like honesty: that brasen wall that at last brings all to ruine that wrestles with it.

I wonder when you will take part with him that is in the right? I hear you should say tis not in my power to wrong *Ree*. Did you ever know I went about to wrong him? No, but I must tell you this, if he leave not his prating, (when he hath sped so well for his ill behaviour,) I may yet doe him more right than ever, and doe you stand by him against it if you dare. Indeed Mr *Ro*. I am afraid your malice toward me, will make you mad at last; for methinks by these carriages of yours, you are already none of the wisest: for however you vapor among your honest companions, such as *Tho. Ree*. and his wife, and a very few more of the same cut: Yet if this businesse come before the judicious, this (like all your other quarrels with me) will end at last in your own shame, and I hope in your sorrow too; I meane in your penitentiall sorrow, *that sorrow not so be sorrowed for, (as the Scripture speaks)* which shall be still hoped, and prayed for by,

August, 24.  
1650.

Your still abused  
Minister,  
JOHN ARIS.

FINIS.

